

City of Lynnwood
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
November 13, 2003

Commissioners present:

Dave Johnson, Chair
Brian Bigler
Patrick Decker
Tia Peycheff
Jacqueline Powers
Donna Walther

Commissioner absent:

Elisa Elliott

Staff present:

Jim Cutts, Community Development Director
Ron Hough, Planning Manager
Dennis Lewis, Senior Planner

Others present:

Council Member Ruth Ross, Council Liaison
Council Member Lisa Utter
Mayor and Mrs. McKinnon

SUMMARY

November 13, 2003, Meeting Minutes

Appointment – Patrick Decker will remain the Commission's representative to the City Center Oversight Committee. Donna Walther will be the alternate.

Code Amendment Initiation – At the request of Edmonds Community College, the Commission initiated a code amendment process to review the City's off-street parking requirements, as they pertain to colleges, and draft any appropriate changes.

Development Regulations Update – Conducted a work session to discuss problems with various residential zone code requirements and to provide input to staff in drafting amendments for future consideration.



CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Johnson called this meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Planning Manager Ron Hough reported that Commissioner Elliott was unable to attend this meeting and had called earlier. All other Commissioners were present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2003 regular Planning Commission meeting and the October 22 joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Appointment – Representative to City Center Oversight Committee:

Chair Johnson moved this item ahead on the agenda and the Commission discussed its representation to the Oversight Committee. Commissioner Decker agreed to continue as the Commission's representative and Commissioner Walther volunteered to fill in as his alternate.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Parking Standards for Colleges:

Planning Manager Hough provided an historical summary of the development of the College District Plan, subsequent building activities on the campus and a recent traffic and parking analysis that was conducted for Edmonds Community College. The results of the study indicated that the City's parking code may be outdated and no longer accurately reflects the needs of today's campus and class schedules. Therefore, EdCC has formally requested that the City review its parking code and make any appropriate adjustments. Hough explained that the Planning Commission is being asked to simply initiate this code review. Proposals will then be drafted and brought back to the Commission for discussion, public hearing and recommendation for City Council action.

Various members of the Commission commented on campus parking and asked about the impact of possible changes on students' driving habits. Suzanne Leveroni, Capital Projects Planning Coordinator for EdCC responded to questions and defined "FTE" as it pertains to "Full Time Equivalent" students.

Commissioner Peycheff moved to initiate the requested parking code review and possible amendments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION

1. Development Regulations update:

Senior Planner Dennis Lewis led the Commission through a series of proposed amendments to the residential sections of the zoning code. He pointed out that the City Council had not yet acted on the Comprehensive Plan amendments and, therefore, the future of the high-density single-family proposal remains uncertain. The residential amendments have been divided into three batches, the second and third of which will come to the Commission in December and January. The Commission was asked to discuss the general problems and concepts at this meeting. Proposals will be brought back later and eventually scheduled for a public hearing.

During the ensuing discussion, staff was asked to provide similar wording in the purpose statements for both single-family and multi-family sections. On the matter of reducing the minimum lot area for the RS-8 and RS-7 zones, it was determined that the changes would result in an increase in single-family home sites, which is desirable for Lynnwood.

There were some differences of opinion about a suggestion that enclosed garages be requested for new single-family homes, and new carports would not be permitted. Although carports are often used for storage and may appear cluttered and aesthetically objectionable, at least some Commissioners recognized that they are also less expensive and may be easier to construct in older neighborhoods where space is limited.

Regarding lot size averaging, Chair Johnson noted that the City Council directed the Commission to consider an amendment to allow no more than one-third of new lots in a subdivision to be smaller than the minimum lot size of the zone. Mr. Lewis said he has contacted several neighboring cities and found that Edmonds, Mountlake Terrace and Mill Creek provide averaging through their Planned Residential Development (PRD) processes. Lynnwood staff has reviewed the current code, found it to be working effectively and saw no need to change it. Developers and property owners like the flexibility it provides without having to go through an additional process (PUD, PRD, etc.). It was noted that the smallest a lot can become in the RS-8 zone is 7,560 sq. ft., which is 90% of the minimum lot size. It was

also pointed out that lots as small as 7,200 sq. ft. are normally permitted in the RS-7 zone and those lots are of sufficient size for the typical single-family home.

The Commission generally agreed that the owner of a "lot of record" in a residential zone should be allowed to develop the lot for a permitted use if it can meet other development standards. It was also pointed out that the current code includes a "Minimum Floor Area" which requires a minimum size for a house in the RS-8 zone (900+ sq. ft. on one floor or 1,350 sq. ft. on 2 floors). The need for that requirement was questioned.

The Commission discussed several of the miscellaneous code sections, including what can be done in one's garage (welding, painting, etc.), whether or not minor auto repairs should be allowed, the need for different rules for single-family and multi-family zones, and what can be done within excess rights-of-way in neighborhoods.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT & INFORMATION

Community Development Director Cutts reported on the following City Council activities:

October 22 Meeting:

Joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council

October 27 Meeting:

Adopted regulation changes for signs in the Planned Regional Center zone.

November 10 Meeting:

Held Public Hearing on the Charles Plat subdivision.

No Council action on the Plan Amendment ordinances.

It was also reported that Steve Nolen, the Mayor's new administrative assistant, is now on the job and Community Development is seeking a replacement for Sandra. The department's new Associate Planner will begin work on December 1. He is currently working for the City of Duvall.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bigler, seconded by Commissioner Psycheff, moved to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Dave Johnson, Chair